

**NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION[571]**

**Adopted and Filed**

**Rule making related to bobcat harvest zone**

The Natural Resource Commission hereby amends Chapter 108, “Mink, Muskrat, Raccoon, Badger, Opossum, Weasel, Striped Skunk, Fox (Red and Gray), Beaver, Coyote, River Otter, Bobcat, Gray (Timber) Wolf and Spotted Skunk Seasons,” Iowa Administrative Code.

*Legal Authority for Rule Making*

This rule making is adopted under the authority provided in Iowa Code sections 455A.5(6), 481A.38, 481A.39 and 481A.87.

*State or Federal Law Implemented*

This rule making implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39 and 481A.87.

*Purpose and Summary*

The Commission adds 12 counties to the bobcat harvest zone starting in 2018. These 12 counties are Cedar, Cherokee, Clinton, Jackson, Jasper, Johnson, Lyon, Plymouth, Polk, Scott, Shelby, and Sioux counties. Population data from the past ten years reveals that Iowa’s bobcat population continues to grow and expand its distribution into more counties with suitable habitat. This data is compiled from a variety of sources, such as hunter surveys, harvest information, field reports, and sightings.

*Public Comment and Changes to Rule Making*

Notice of Intended Action for this rule making was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on February 14, 2018, as **ARC 3624C**. A public hearing was held on March 6, 2018, at 12 noon in Conference Room 3 E&W, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa. No comments were received at the public hearing. However, six comments were received during the public comment period: one in opposition to expanding the bobcat harvest zone, three supporting the addition of specific counties in the bobcat harvest zone (Jackson, Jones), one asking to increase the bobcat bag limit in southeast Iowa, and one asking to allow night vision lighting for hunting coyotes.

The majority of comments received were in favor of expanded bobcat harvest opportunities consistent with this rule making, with several comments requesting a more aggressive expansion of the harvest zone or bag limit than was proposed. The Commission continues to monitor the growth and spread of the bobcat population across the state. The number of bobcats that can be taken and the counties covered by the harvest zone are set to provide maximum opportunity to hunters and trappers while ensuring the long-term viability of the population based on available biological data.

No changes from the Notice have been made.

*Adoption of Rule Making*

This rule making was adopted by the Commission on April 12, 2018.

*Fiscal Impact*

The rule making does not require any financial expenditure to implement. No anticipated staff time, training, or resource expenses are associated with the change in the bobcat harvest zone. The Department anticipates a modest increase in the fur harvester license sales from the rule making. Resident fur

harvester licenses, with the wildlife habitat fee, are \$31.50 per year pursuant to Iowa Code section 483A.1(1)“p.” If the Department sold five additional fur harvester licenses per newly opened county (5 x 12 = 60), these license sales would generate approximately \$1,890 in new revenue (\$31.50 x 60) for the State Fish and Game Protection Fund.

#### *Jobs Impact*

This amendment may have a minor positive impact on jobs by increasing overall trapping and hunting activity in the added counties. This amendment will enable trappers and hunters to harvest bobcats over a larger area of the state each season, which may result in more business for the private sector in the following areas: hunting and trapping gear and other related equipment and taxidermy work. This amendment could also lead to increased business for restaurants, hotels, and gas stations as people move around the state participating in the sport.

#### *Waivers*

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rule making would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Department for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 561—Chapter 10.

#### *Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee*

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rule making by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rule making at its [regular monthly meeting](#) or at a special meeting. The Committee’s meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

#### *Effective Date*

This rule making will become effective on June 13, 2018.

The following rule-making action is adopted:

Amend subrule 108.7(2) as follows:

**108.7(2) *Open area.*** River otters may be taken statewide. Bobcats may be taken in the following counties: Adair, Adams, Appanoose, Audubon, Cass, Cedar, Cherokee, Clarke, Clinton, Crawford, Dallas, Davis, Decatur, Des Moines, Fremont, Guthrie, Harrison, Henry, Iowa, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Keokuk, Lee, Louisa, Lucas, Lyon, Madison, Mahaska, Marion, Mills, Monona, Monroe, Montgomery, Muscatine, Page, Plymouth, Polk, Pottawattamie, Poweshiek, Ringgold, Scott, Shelby, Sioux, Taylor, Union, Van Buren, Wapello, Warren, Washington, Wayne, and Woodbury.

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